

Dossier on the

C.I.A.

by William R. Carson

For some time I have been disturbed by the way the CIA has been diverted from its original assignment. It has become an operational and at times policy-making arm of the government. I never thought when I set up the CIA that it would be injected into peacetime cloak-and-dagger operations. --ex-President Harry S. Truman.

NOTHING has happened since that pronouncement by the agency's creator in December 1963 to remove or reduce the cause for concern over the CIA's development. As currently organized, supervised, structured and led, it may be that the CIA has outlived its usefulness. Conceivably, its very existence causes the President and the National Security Council to rely too much on clandestine operations. Possibly its reputation, regardless of the facts, is now so bad that as a foreign policy instrument the agency has become counter-productive. Unfortunately the issue of its efficiency, as measured by its performance in preventing past intelligence failures and consequent foreign policy fiascos, is always avoided on grounds of "secrecy". So American taxpayers provide upwards of \$750,000,000 a year for the CIA without knowing how the money is spent or to what extent the CIA fulfils or exceeds its authorized intelligence functions.

The gathering of intelligence is a necessary and legitimate activity in time of peace as well as in war. But it does raise a very real problem of the proper place and control of agents who are required, or authorized on their own recognizance, to commit acts of espionage. In a democracy it also poses the dilemma of secret activities and the values of a free society. Secrecy is obviously essential for espionage but it can be -- and has been -- perverted to hide intelligence activities even from those with the constitutional responsibility to sanction them. A common rationalization is the phrase "If the Ambassador/Secretary/President doesn't know he won't have to lie to cover up." The prolonged birth of the CIA was marked by a reluctance on the part of politicians and others to face these difficulties, and the agency as it came to exist still bears the marks of this indecision.

What we need to do is to examine how the U.S. gathers its intelligence, and consider how effective its instruments are and what room there is for improvement. Every government agency has its own peculiarities. In 1961, the CIA's Director, acknowledged before the American Society

of Newspaper Editors that the CIA should be supervised by the Intelligence Agency. The time is long overdue for the CIA to assume its proper supervisory role in Central Intelligence War. Under this CIA administration of inquiry by the Intelligence Agency and specifically requiring disclosure of titles, salaries, and expenses on expense accounts to the Director's Office without adverse comment from the Government and the Government for staff abroad and their families. 1949 Central Intelligence Director a license

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representative of the unending gambitry and danger in life human aspect of espionage and secret operations. At this level the stakes are lower and the "struggle" frequently takes bizarre and even ludicrous twists. For, as Alexander Foote noted in his *Handbook for Spies*, the average agent's "real difficulties are concerned with the practice of his trade. The setting up of his transmitters, the obtaining of funds, and the arrangement of his rendezvous. The irritating administrative details occupy a disproportionate portion of his waking life."

As an example of the administrative hazards, one day in 1960 a technical administrative employee of the CIA stationed at its quasi-secret headquarters in Japan flew to Singapore to conduct a reliability test of a local recruit. On arrival he checked into one of Singapore's older hotels to receive the would-be spy and his CIA recruiter. Contact was made. The recruit was instructed in what a lie detector test does and was wired up, and the technician plugged the machine into the room's electrical outlet. Thereupon it blew out all the hotel's lights. The ensuing confusion and darkness did not cover a getaway by the trio. They were discovered, arrested, and jailed as American spies.

By itself the incident sounds like a sequence from an old Peters Sellers movie, however, its consequences were not nearly so funny. In performing this routine mission the CIA set off a two-stage international incident between England and the United States, caused the Secretary of State to write a letter of apology to a foreign chief of state, made the U.S. Ambassador to Singapore look like the proverbial cuckold, the final outcome being a situation wherein the United States Government lied in public -- and was caught!